

ARTHUR W. PINERO

Dandy Dick

A FARCE

In Three Acts

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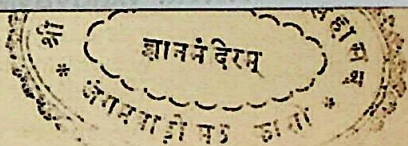
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INTRODUCTORY NOTE

"DANDY DICK" was the third of the farces which Mr. Pinero wrote for the old Court Theatre—a series of plays which, besides giving playgoers a fresh source of laughter, and the English stage a new order of comic play, brought plentiful prosperity to the joint management of Mr. Arthur Cecil and the late Mr. John Clayton. But a kind of melancholy interest attaches to "Dandy Dick," for this play was, as it were, the swan-song of the old theatre and of the Clayton and Cecil partnership; and it was the piece in which Mr. Clayton was acting when death overtook him, to the general grief.

The production of "Dandy Dick" may be considered as something of a *tour de force* in its way. "The Schoolmistress" was at the end of its successful run, and Mr. Pinero was under contract to supply its successor by a certain date, when Mr. Clayton one day went down

to Brighton, where the dramatist was then at work, to hear him read the two completed acts of the new play. To Mr. Clayton's consternation, however, Mr. Pinero announced that he was dissatisfied with his work, and proposed to begin an entirely fresh play, as he had a more promising idea. But time was pressing, and a successor to "The Schoolmistress" was an immediate necessity. However, Mr. Pinero's idea of writing a play round a dean, who, while being a paragon of dignity and decorum, should be driven by an indiscreet act into a most undignified dilemma, appealed to Mr. Clayton, and, hastening back to London with the sketches for the requisite scenes, he left Mr. Pinero to set to work at once upon the new scheme. And within a few weeks, indeed by the time the scenery was ready, the new play was completed, the rural constable of a village adjacent to Brighton having suggested the character of Noah Topping.

"Dandy Dick" was produced at the Court Theatre on January 27th, 1887, and, meeting with a most favourable initial reception, it settled down immediately into a complete success. The following is a copy of the first-night programme :—

ROYAL COURT THEATRE,
SLOANE SQUARE, S.W.

Lessees and Managers :

MR. JOHN CLAYTON and MR. ARTHUR CECIL.

Programme.

THIS EVENING, THURSDAY, JANUARY 27,

At 8.30 punctually,

DANDY DICK,

AN ORIGINAL FARCE, IN THREE ACTS,

BY

A. W. PINERO.

THE VERY REV. AUGUSTIN JEDD, D.D.

(Dean of St. Marvells) . . . Mr. JOHN CLAYTON.

SIR TRISTRAM MARDON, Bart. . . Mr. EDMUND MAURICE.

MAJOR TARVER	{ —th Hussars, quar- tered at Durnstone, near St. Marvells }	{ Mr. F. KERR. Mr. H. EVERSFIELD.
MR. DARBEY		

BLORE (Butler at the Deanery) . . . Mr. ARTHUR CECIL.

NOAH TOPPING (Constable at St. Mar-
vells) . . . Mr. W. H. DENNY.

HATCHAM (Sir Tristram's groom). . . Mr. W. LUGG.

GEORGIANA TIDMAN (a Widow, the
Dean's sister) . . . Mrs. JOHN WOOD.

SALOME	{ the Dean's Daughters .	{ Miss MARIE LEWES Miss NORREYS.
SHEBA		

HANNAH TOPPING (formerly in Service
at the Deanery) . . . Miss LAURA LINDEN.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

ACT I.

AT THE DEANERY, ST. MARVELLS.

(MORNING.)

ACT II.

THE SAME PLACE

(EVENING.)

ACT III.—THE NEXT DAY.

SCENE 1.—*"The Strong Box," St. Marvells.*SCENE 2.—*The Deanery again.**The curtain will be lowered for a few minutes between the two scenes.*

NEW SCENERY BY MR. T. W. HALI.

PRECEDED, AT EIGHT O'CLOCK, BY

"THE NETTLE."

AN ORIGINAL COMEDIETTA BY ERNEST WARREN.

"Dandy Dick" was performed 171 times between the first night and the 22nd of July, when, the old theatre being demolished, Mr. Clayton took a temporary lease of Toole's Theatre, and transferred the play thither, where it ran 75 nights more.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

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A company had already been sent out, under the auspices of the Court management, to perform "Dandy Dick" in the provinces; but, when the play was withdrawn from the London boards, Mr. Clayton set out himself with a company, and it was during this tour that he died at Liverpool.

In America Mr. Daly produced "Dandy Dick," with Miss Ada Rehan in Mrs. John Wood's part, but no very great success was achieved; whereas in Australia its reception was so enthusiastic that it ran for quite an unusual time both in Melbourne and Sydney. In the character of the Dean Mr. G. W. Anson achieved perhaps the greatest of his Australian successes, and Mr. Robert Brough made his mark as the policeman.

MALCOLM C. SALAMAN.

December 1892



THE PERSONS OF THE PLAY

THE VERY REV. AUGUSTIN JEDD, D.D. (The Dean
of St. Marvells)

SALOME } (his Daughters)
SHEBA }

GEORGIANA TIDMAN (his Sister)

BLORE (Butler at the Deanery)

SIR TRISTRAM MARDON. Bart.

HATCHAM (his Groom)

MAJOR TARVER } (—th Hussars,
MR. DARBEY } quartered at Durnstone.
near St. Marvells)

NOAH TOPPING (Constable of St. Marvells)

HANNAH TOPPING

THE FIRST ACT
AT THE DEANERY, ST. MARVELLS

THE SRCOND ACT
THE SAME PLACE
(EVENING)

THE THIRD ACT
THE NEXT DAY

DANDY DICK

THE FIRST ACT

The morning-room in the Deanery of St. Marvells, with a large arched opening leading to the library on the right, and a deeply-recessed window opening out to the garden on the left. It is a bright spring morning, and an air of comfort and serenity pervades the place.

SALOME, a tall, handsome, dark girl of about three-and-twenty, is sitting with her elbows resting on her knees, staring wildly into vacancy. **SHEBA**, a fair little girl of about seventeen, wearing short petticoats, shares her despondency, and lies prostrate upon the settee.

SALOME.

Oh! oh my! oh my! oh my!

SHEBA.

[*Sitting upright.*] Oh, my gracious goodness, goodness gracious me!
[*They both walk about excitedly.*]

SALOME.

There's only one terrible word for it—it's a fix!

A

DANDY DICK

SHEBA.

It's worse than that! It's a scrape! How did you ever get led into it?

SALOME.

How did *we* get led into it? Halves, Sheba, please.

SHEBA.

It was Major Tarver's proposal, and I believe, Salome, that it is to *you* Major Tarver is paying attention.

SALOME.

The Fancy Dress Masked Ball at Durnstone is promoted by the Officers of the Hussars. I believe that the young gentleman you have impressed calls himself an officer though he is merely a lieutenant.

SHEBA.

[*Indignantly.*] Mr. Darbey is *certainly* an officer—a small officer. How dare you gird at me, Salome?

SALOME.

Very well, then. When to-night we appear at the Durnstone Athenæum, unknown to dear Papa, on the arms of Major Tarver and Mr. Darbey, I consider that we shall be equally wicked. Oh, how can we be so wrong?

SHEBA.

Well, we're not wrong yet. We're only *going* to be wrong; that's a very different matter.

SALOME.

That's true. Besides, there's this to remember—

we're inexperienced girls and have only dear Papa. But oh, now that the Ball is to-night, I repent, Sheba, I repent!

SHEBA.

I sha'n't do that till to-morrow. But oh, how I *shall* repent to-morrow!

SALOME.

[*Taking an envelope from her pocket and almost crying.*] You'd repent now if you had seen the account for the fancy dresses.

SHEBA.

Has it come in?

SALOME.

Yes, the Major enclosed it to me this morning. You know, Sheba, Major Tarver promised to get the dresses made in London, so I gave him our brown paper patterns to send to the *costumier*.

SHEBA.

[*Shocked.*] Oh, Salome, do you think he quizzed them?

SALOME.

No; I sealed them up and marked outside "To be opened only by a lady."

SHEBA.

That's all right. I hate the plan of myself in brown paper.

SALOME.

Well, of course Major Tarver begged to be allowed to pay for the dresses, and I said I couldn't dream of

permitting it, and then he said he should be most unhappy if he didn't, and, just as I thought he was going to have his own way [*bursting into tears*], he cheered up and said he'd yield to a lady. [*Taking a large account from the envelope.*] And oh! he's yielded.

SHEBA.

Read it! Don't spare me!

SALOME.

[*Reading.*] "Debtor to Lewis Isaacs, *Costumier* to the Queen, Bow Street. One gown—period, French Revolution, 1798—Fifteen guineas!"

SHEBA.

[*Sinking on her knees, clutching the table.*] Oh!

SALOME.

"Trimmings, linings, buttons, frillings—Seven guineas!"

SHEBA.

[*Hysterically.*] Yah!

SALOME.

That's mine!

SHEBA.

[*Putting her fingers into her ears.*] Now for mine, oooh!

SALOME.

[*Reading.*] "One skirt and bodice—flower girl—period uncertain—Ten guineas."

SHEBA.

Less than yours! What a shame!

SALOME.

"Trimmings, linings, buttons, frillings — Five guineas! Extras, Two guineas. Total, Forty pounds, nineteen. Ladies' own brown paper patterns mislaid. Terms, Cash!" [*They throw themselves into each other's arms.*] Oh, Sheba!

SHEBA.

Salome! Are there forty pounds in the wide world?

SALOME.

My heart weighs twenty. What shall we do?

SHEBA.

If we were only a few years older I should suggest that we wrote nice notes to Papa and committed suicide.

SALOME.

Brought up as we have been, that's out of the question!

SHEBA.

Then let us be brave women, and wear the dresses!

SALOME.

Of course we'll do that—but the bill!

SHEBA.

We must get dear Papa in a good humour and coax him to make us a present of money. He knows we haven't been charitable in the town for ever so long!

SALOME.

Poor dear Papa! He hasn't paid our proper dress-maker's bill yet, and I'm sure he's pressed for money.

SHEBA.

But we can't help that when *we're* pressed for money—poor dear Papa!

SALOME.

Suppose poor Papa refuses to give us a present?

SHEBA.

Then we must play the piano when he's at work on his Concordance—poor dear Papa.

SALOME.

However, don't let us wrong poor Papa in advance. Let us try to think how nice we shall look.

SHEBA.

Oh yes—sha'n't I!

SALOME.

Oh, I shall! And as for stealing out of the house with Major Tarver when poor dear Papa has gone to bed, why, Gerald Tarver would die for me!

SHEBA.

So would Nugent Darbey for me; besides I'm not old enough to know better.

SALOME.

You're not so very much younger than I, Sheba!

DANDY DICK.

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SHEBA.

Indeed, Salome! Then why do you keep me in short skirts?

SALOME.

Why! you cruel girl! You know I can't lengthen you till I'm married!

[BLORE, *the butler, a venerable-looking person, with rather a clerical suggestion about his dress, enters by the window.*

BLORE.

[*Benignly.*] The two soldier gentlemen have just rode hup, Miss Salome.

[*The girls clutch each other's hands.*

SALOME.

You mean Major Tarver?

SHEBA.

And Mr. Darbey. They have called to inquire after poor Papa.

SALOME.

Poor Papa!

BLORE.

Shall I show them hin, Miss Sheba?

SHEBA.

Yes, Blore, dear, and hang your h's on the hat-stand.

[BLORE *laughs sweetly at SHEBA and shakes his fingers at her playfully.*

DANDY DICK

BLORE.

[*Vindictively, behind their backs.*] 'Ussies![*He goes out.*]

SALOME.

Am I all right, Sheba?

SHEBA.

Yes. Am I?

SALOME.

Yes. [*Looking out at window.*] Here they are!
How well Gerald Tarver dismounts! Oh!

SHEBA.

He left his liver in India, didn't he?

SALOME.

No—only part of it.

SHEBA.

Well—part of it.

SALOME.

And that he gave to his Queen, brave fellow!

SHEBA.

[*Seating herself in an artificial attitude.*] Where
shall we be—here?

SALOME.

[*Running to the piano.*] All right, you be admiring
my voice!

SHEBA.

Oh, I daresay!

DANDY DICK

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SALONE.

Here they are, and we're doing nothing !

SHELA.

Let's run away and then come in unconsciously.

SALONE.

Yes—unconsciously.

[They run off through the Library. BLORE shows in MAJOR TARVER and Mr. DARBEY, who are both in regimentals. MAJOR TARVER is a middle-aged tall, angular officer with a thin face, yellow complexion, and red eyes. He is alternately in a state of great excitement and depression. Mr. DARBEY is a mere boy, but with a pompous, patronizing manner.]

DARBEY.

The Dean's out of the way, eh !

BLORE.

Yes, sir, he his.

TARVER.

Eh ? How is the Dean ? Never mind—perhaps Miss Jedd is at home ?

BLORE.

Yes, sir, sho his.

TARVER.

It would be discourteous to run away without asking Miss Jedd after her father.

DANDY DICK

DARBey.

[*Throwing himself on the settee.*] Deuced bad form !

BLORE.

The ladies were 'ere a minute ago.

[*SALOME and SHEBA walk in together. SALOME has her arm round her sister's waist and looks up to her with a sweet trusting smile. They start in confusion on seeing TARVER and DARBey.*

SALOME.

Major Tarver !

SHEBA.

Mr. Darbey !

TARVER.

[*Taking SALOME's hand eagerly.*] My dear Miss Jedd !

DARBey.

[*Rising and putting a glass to his eye.*] Hah yah !
Hah yah !

SALOME.

[*With her hand on her heart.*] You quite startled us.

TARVER.

[*In an agony of contrition.*] Oh, did we ?

DARBey.

Awfully cut up to hear it.

SHEBA.

We never dreamt of finding two visitors for Papa.

BLORE.

Why, you told me to show the gentlemen hin, Miss Sheba !

[The two girls start guiltily and glare at BLORE.]

SALOME.

[With suppressed rage.] You needn't wait, Blore !

BLORE.

[To himself.] Let 'em 'ang that on the 'atstand !

[BLORE goes out. DARBEE and SHEBA stroll together into the library.]

TARVER.

[To SALOME.] We thought we'd ride over directly after parade to make the final arrangements for to-night. Have the costumes arrived ?

SALOME.

Yes, they came yesterday in a hamper labelled "Miss Jedd, Secretary, Cast-off Clothing Distribution League."

TARVER.

That was my idea—came to me in the middle of the night.

SALOME.

Dear Major Tarver, surely this terrible strain on your nerves is very, very bad for you with your—your—

TARVER.

My liver—say the word, Miss Jedd.

DANDY DICK

SALOME.

[*Drooping her head.*] Oh, Major Tarver!

TARVER.

It is frightfully injurious. Of course I'm excited now, and you see me at my best, but the alternating fits of hopeless despondency are shocking to witness and to endure!

SALOME.

Oh!

TARVER.

It's all that damned India! Oh! what have I said! You will never forgive me.

SALOME.

Indeed, indeed I will!

TARVER.

Never. Oh, Miss Jedd, my forgetfulness has brought me—one of my—terrible attacks—of depression!

SALOME.

Major Tarver!

[*She leads him to a chair into which he sinks in a ghastly state.* DARBEY strolls in from the library with SHEBA.

DARBEY.

[*To SHEBA.*] Your remarks about the army are extremely complimentary. On behalf of the army I thank you. We fellows are not a bad sort take us all round.

SHEBA.

There's a grand future before you, isn't there?

DARBEY.

Well, I suppose there is if I go on as I'm going now.

TARVER.

[To SALOME.] Thanks, the attack has passed. Now about to-night; at what time is the house entirely quiet?

SALOME.

Poor dear Papa goes round with Blore at half-past nine—after that all is rest and peacefulness.

TARVER.

Then if we're here with the closed carriage at ten—!

[They go together into the library.]

DARBEY.

[To SHEBA.] Some of us army men can slave too. Tarver's queer livah has thrown all the arrangements for the Fancy Ball on my shoulders. [SALOME and TARVER re-enter.] Look at him—that's when he's enjoying life!

TARVER.

[Laughing convulsively.] Ha! ha! ha! ho! he! he! Good, eh, Miss Jedd?

SALOME.

But suppose dear Papa should hear us crunching down the gravel path!

DANDY DICK.

TARVER.

Oh ! *[He sinks on to the settee with a vacant stare, his arms hanging helplessly.]*

DARBEY.

[To SHEBA.] There—now his career is a burden to him !

SHEBA.

Oh !

SALOME.

Would you like a glass of water, Major Tarver ?

TARVER.

[Taking SALOME's hand.] Thank you, dear Miss Jedd, with the least suggestion of cayenne pepper in it.

SHEBA.

[Looking out at window.] Oh, Salome ! Papa ! Papa !

TARVER.

The Dean ?

DARBEY.

The Dean !

[They all collect themselves in a flutter. The two girls go to meet their father, who enters at the window with his head bowed and his hands behind his back, in deep thought. THE DEAN is a portly man of about fifty, with a dignified demeanour, a suave voice and persuasive manner, and a noble brow surmounted by silver-grey hair. BLORE follows THE DEAN, carrying some books, a small bunch of flowers, and an umbrella.]

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SALOME.

[*Tenderly.*] Papa!

SHEBA.

Papsey!

[*THE DEAN rouses himself, discovers his children and removes his hat.*

THE DEAN.

[*To SALOME.*] Salome! [*To SHEBA.*] My toy-child!
[*He draws the girls to him and embraces them, then sees TARVER and DARBEY.*] Dear me! Strangers!

TARVER and DARBEY.

[*Coughing uncomfortably.*] H'm!

SALOME.

[*Reproachfully, taking his hat from him.*] Papa!
Major Tarver and Mr. Darbey have ridden over from Durnstone to ask how your cold is.[*SHEBA takes the gold-rimmed pince-nez which hangs upon THE DEAN'S waistcoat and places it before his eyes.*

THE DEAN.

Dear me! Major! Mr. Garvey.

SHEBA.

Mr. Darbey!

THE DEAN.

Darbey! How good of you! [*With his girls still embracing him he extends a hand to each of the men.*]
My cold is better. [*BLORE goes out through the library.*]
Major—Mr. Garvey—these inquiries strike me as

being so kind that I insist—no, no, I *beg* that you will share our simple dinner with us to-night at six o'clock !

TARVER.

[*Disconcerted.*] Oh !

DARBey.

It'm !

THE DEAN.

Let me see—Tuesday night is——

SALOME.

Leg of mutton, Papa !

THE DEAN.

Thank you. Mutton, hot.

SHEBA.

And custards, Papsey.

THE DEAN.

Thank you, toy-child—custards, cold. And a welcome—warm.

TARVER.

[*Looking to SALOME.*] Well, I—ah—[*SALOME nods her head to him violently.*] That is, certainly. Dean, certainly.

DARBey.

Delighted, my dear Dean—delighted !

[*THE DEAN gives DARBey a severe look, and with an important cough walks into the library. The men and the girls speak in undertones.*]